



Long Island Sound Support

Long Island Sound is a waterbody on the rebound. Cleaning up and protecting Long Island Sound has been a complicated and expensive process, involving scientists, elected officials, regulators, educators, and citizens. These partners have made significant strides to restore and protect the Sound, but the truth is without public involvement and support, pollution of the Sound will continue. Studies show that every person living in the Sound's watershed contributes to the problems that can suffocate fish, poison aquatic life, and degrade habitat. The battle for cleaning up Long Island Sound is being fought on many fronts, and there are many ways that you, as a concerned citizen, can help. Your help is necessary, easy, and personally rewarding!

Take Personal Responsibility

Each individual effort at conservation makes a difference! The suggestions listed below and on the following pages provide a start to lifestyle changes for preventing pollutants from getting into our environment while protecting the natural features of the landscape that help remove those pollutants that escape our control.

Become Informed

Knowledge is key to taking actions to protect the Sound and to convince others that change is needed on all fronts. Becoming an effective advocate will be easier and more enjoyable as your knowledge grows.

Want to learn more? Want to know is Long Island Sound getting better or if the fish and wildlife populations are more abundant? Answers to these questions and more are in the *Sound Health Report*, a snapshot of the Sound's water quality conditions, status of living resources, and trends in land use and development. Look for the report and other detailed information on the Long Island Sound Study Web site: www.epa.gov/region01/eco/lis. Contact the Long Island Sound Office to be added to the Long Island Sound Study Newsletter mailing list.

What You Can You Do

In and Around the Home

♦ Landscape in ways not harmful to the plants and animals of Long Island Sound. Use native vegetation that provides habitat for other species. Leave grass clippings on the lawn to recycle nutrients. Use a soil test kit to determine the amount of fertilizer needed. Learn how to practice environmentally sound gardening, by calling Connecticut or New York Sea Grant for a Sound Gardening guide or by visiting the Long Island Sound Study Web site.



♦ Conserve water at home and in the office to reduce the volume of waste water that must be treated by a sewage treatment plant or septic system. This will increase the efficiency of treatment and save you money.

♦ The more electricity you use, the more power plant air emissions you generate, that contribute to both air and water pollution. Conserve energy by using energy efficient lightbulbs, turning lights off when not in use, turning down the heat when you are not home, running the air conditioner at a higher temperature, and having your furnace and air conditioner tuned up annually.

♦ Car exhausts emit nitrogen oxides as part of the combustion process, contributing to the hypoxia (low dissolved oxygen) problem in the Sound. Leave the car home, ride a bike, walk, or take public transportation whenever possible.

♦ An improperly working septic system can contaminate ground water flowing to local streams and can pollute Long Island Sound. Inspect septic tanks annually, and pump out every three to five years. Avoid pouring kitchen grease and solids down your kitchen sink to minimize malfunctioning septic systems.

♦ Once in the Sound, litter can entangle wildlife, threaten the safety of boaters, and mar beaches and coastlines. Don't be a litterbug! Never throw litter, especially plastic or cigarette butts, into the street, down storm drains, or onto the beach. Reduce-Reuse-Recycle as much as possible. Rainfall carries the trash into the storm sewers where it eventually travels into the Sound.



♦ Substances poured down drains, storm sewers, or on the land are likely to be transported to the Sound. Minimize use of hazardous products. When you must, use those labelled CAUTION, as these are less toxic than products labelled DANGER or WARNING. Buy only as much of the products as you need; you will then properly dispose of only the container, not the toxic substance it contained.

♦ Properly dispose of the toxic products that you use. Never pour motor oil or other auto fluids down a drain or sewer or discard them with the trash (in Connecticut and New York, it is against the law!). New York State requires most service stations to accept motor oil for recycling. In Connecticut, municipal



recycling stations accept motor oil for recycling. Some service stations will accept brake and transmission fluids and antifreeze; if not, save these in separate containers for local collection. Many counties and municipalities have hazardous waste collection days. Call your local waste or sanitation department for a schedule.

♦ Pet waste contains bacteria and viruses that can contaminate shellfish and cause the closing of bathing areas. Pick up after your pets with a newspaper or scooper and dispose of the wastes in the garbage or toilet.

♦ If you live in Connecticut, buy a Long Island Sound License Plate and help benefit the Sound by funding projects to improve habitat restoration, public access, public education and outreach, and research. Call 1-800-CT-SOUND for order forms.



In and On the Sound

♦ Never feed water birds. This encourages them to stay through the winter and gather in flocks. Their droppings pollute shellfish and bathing waters. Food not eaten can attract vermin, creating a health problem. Vermin can also threaten nesting bird populations.

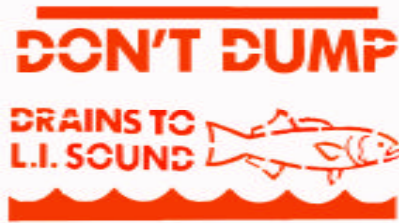
♦ Gather all six-pack rings and other plastic items for proper disposal. If they are washed into the Sound, marine animals may eat these items or become entangled in them.

♦ Anglers, hunters, and commercial fishermen should adhere to applicable management measures and regulations to minimize non-harvest mortality (catch and release).

♦ Boaters - remember it is illegal to discharge wastes from a Type III (holding tank) marine sanitation device. Pumpout facilities must be used to prevent release of pathogens directly into coastal waters. Contact the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and New York Sea Grant for guides to marine pumpout facilities.

In Your Community

- ♦ Communicate with your federal, state, and local legislators on Long Island Sound affairs.
- ♦ Participate in policy decisions and attend public meetings, such as your local planning and zoning, conservation, or wetlands commission meetings. Speak out on local issues that can have ramifications for your town and Long Island Sound.
- ♦ Organize, support, or participate in:
 - local harbor management plans;
 - citizen water quality monitoring efforts;
 - beach cleanup efforts or litter control programs;
 - storm drain stenciling projects in your neighborhood; and
 - beach grass plantings or other habitat restoration efforts.



Become Involved

If you use Long Island Sound to swim, fish, scuba dive, or boat, there is probably a responsible and credible “user group” in your area that represents people who share your particular interest in the Sound. These organizations often have a Long Island Sound agenda of some kind, and may be active in fund-raising or providing policy input on all sides of the issue. Ask around at your local marina, bait shop, dive shop, beach, or the EPA Long Island Sound Office.

Citizen groups can take an active role in issues that affect Long Island Sound on a local, regional, or national level. Being a member of a citizen group typically involves going to meetings and supporting staff people, serving as environmental educators, watchdogs, or group spokespersons, or giving testimony on behalf of the group. The combined resources of an organization’s membership maintains commitment and provides a greater information base, thus filling information gaps that are inevitable with such a large and complex waterbody as Long Island Sound. Your voice united with many others can often have more influence in the legislative and policy-setting process, and helps send a stronger message about environmental stewardship to the public. Citizen groups are an important part of the partnership needed to effectively clean up the Sound.

Try attending a commission meeting in your town, such as the Planning and Zoning Commission. This Commission is likely to have a major impact on how land is used in your town. Just by listening, you will soon find that many of the commissioners share your concerns and are looking for solutions. When you are comfortable with how the commission works, and have seen how public participation is a part of the process, speak out on local issues that can have ramifications for your town and Long Island Sound. Letters and public forums are good tools for raising the profile of Long Island Sound issues among elected and agency officials. Soon you will become a recognized part of the process in your town. See the difference you have made!

However you choose to get involved,
the future of the Sound depends on people like you
getting involved in the process and making a difference.

THE LONG ISLAND SOUND STUDY

The Long Island Sound Study (LISS) is a research and management project that began in 1985, and is part of the National Estuary Program, a section of the Federal Clean Water Act created to protect estuaries of national importance. The LISS is a cooperative effort involving research institutions, regulatory agencies, marine user groups, and other concerned organizations, and individuals. The Study produced a *Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan* (completed in March of 1994) to clean up and protect the Sound. The Plan is being implemented by the Environmental Protection Agency and the states of Connecticut and New York and other program partners. For more information on the LISS or its public education activities, contact:

EPA Long Island Sound Office

Stamford Government Center
888 Washington Boulevard
Stamford, CT 06904-2152
(203) 977-1541

CT Department of Environmental Protection

Bureau of Water Management
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106-5127
(860) 424-3276

Connecticut Sea Grant

205 Prospect Street
New Haven, CT 06511-2189
(203) 432-5118

EPA Long Island Sound Office

New York Sea Grant
146 Suffolk Hall
State University of New York at Stony Brook
Stony Brook, NY 11794-5002
(631) 632-9216

NY Department of Environmental Conservation

Division of Marine Resources
205 Belle Meade Road
East Setauket, NY 11733
(631) 444-0467

New York Sea Grant

3059 Sound Ave
Riverhead, NY 11901-1098
(631) 727-3910

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To be placed on the mailing list, please tear off and return this coupon to:

**EPA Long Island Sound Office
New York Sea Grant
146 Suffolk Hall
SUNY at Stony Brook
Stony Brook, NY 11794-5002
Or E-mail: ksz1@cornell.edu**

NAME _____

ORGANIZATION (if any) _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____